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ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE SECRET SERVICE AND THE GSA

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker. I was in Colombia, South America, this past week with the President for what was an outstanding discussion among 30 Presidents, including the President of the United States. The meeting reenforced our commitment to South America and Central America on business opportunities, small business opportunities, human rights, and the controlling of drug trafficking.

At the same time, we had to, in essence, listen and hear about a horrible action that occurred by members of the Secret Service. This does not undermine the Secret Service's long years of service for 147 years, but there must be accountability.

I do not think that we should cede any authority to the House Oversight Committee. This is a question of Homeland Security and national security, and we must begin to act immediately for a full investigation.

Finally, on the General Services Administration, it should be cleaned up and cleaned out. I know for a fact that is true because monies that are being spent on the Mickey Leland Federal Building—the contractor is Gilbane. They are adhering to no rules regarding small businesses, minority-owned businesses, diversity and workforce, nothing at all. They are overseen by the General Service Administration, which has done absolutely nothing to rein in companies like Gilbane that have done nothing as it relates to diversity of small business and are doing nothing to adhere to the American value that everybody must have an opportunity under Federal funding.

GSA, clean up your act.

SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, this past break that we were just on, I had an occasion to visit a great friend and ally in the Persian Gulf area. If we ever needed allies in that area because of Iran, we sure need them right now. I'm talking about the country of Bahrain.

Bahrain is a great friend, not only because they have been historically a friend of the United States, but we have the Fifth Fleet there, and the

Fifth Fleet is there to protect the interests of that part of the world as well as the United States of America. The Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf are right there, and the Fifth Fleet is there to guarantee that shipping of oil from that part of the world can get through. So Bahrain is extremely important to the United States, as well as being a friend and an ally. In addition to that, Bahrain is also a free trade agreement partner. We have a great free trade agreement with them, and they've been absolutely great as far as trade is concerned. I think we have a trade surplus with them.

The reason I've brought this up tonight, Mr. Speaker, is because I watch television, and I've seen where there has been a repressive government in Bahrain. There is no question there have been problems in the past. There has been overreaction by the police in certain instances in the past year, year and a half. As a result, there were people who were hurt severely when they were demonstrating in the streets of Bahrain. But the King and the Crown Prince have worked very hard to solve this problem.

One of the problems they have over there is the Iranian Government is working to try to undermine many of the countries in the Persian Gulf, and Bahrain is one of them; and there have been people coming from Iran into Bahrain to try to work with the demonstrators to undermine that government and overthrow it. People from Bahrain who are fairly radical have gone to Iran and Iraq to learn tactics to employ against the government there.

We have found that just recently there have been firebombings of homes of police. There have been firebombings of police in the streets. Some of them have burned to death. Just recently, at one of the homes of a policeman there who was gone, his wife and child were there and their house was firebombed.

The police have been ordered by the government, the King, and the Crown Prince to be very careful in how they react to the demonstrators. As a matter of fact, they don't use ammunition; they use tear gas to control the crowds. So there is no attempt right now to hurt the people there who are trying to hurt the police and the government.

I think it's important that we get the proper perspective on what's going on over there because this is one country that is extremely important to the United States because of energy that we get as well as trade and other things. If the Strait of Hormuz were to be closed down, if the Persian Gulf was closed down, if they sank some ships in there or if they put mines in the Strait of Hormuz or the Persian Gulf, the Fifth Fleet would have to go in and clean those out to make sure that commerce continued through the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. So Bahrain is extremely important.

Now I want to make a couple of points tonight that are extremely important.

First of all, the government and the police have made mistakes in the past; there is no question about that. Demonstrators, as I said before, have been infiltrated by outside radical elements. The demonstrators have used terrorist tactics, as I said, to try to destroy and undermine the government, and the Molotov cocktail is one of the things that they've been using. They've also been learning other things from the radicals that come in there or have been trained by the Iranians.

The government has attempted to solve the problems. As a matter of fact, the King appointed an outside commission, and this is the commission report: Report of the National Commission Charged with the Recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) Report. This is a huge report. It's not by the Government of Bahrain. It's by an outside group of people who were being fair and objective when they made these recommendations to the government. The King and the Crown Prince and the government are doing everything they can to implement these recommendations, and we need to applaud them for doing that.

They are reaching out to the demonstrators and the more radical elements to try to get them to the conference table to solve these problems. So far the demonstrators, supported in large part by these radical elements, will not come to the conference table and discuss these issues. The government is trying to reach out to them, but the demonstrators don't want to. That's something I think the world needs to know and the people in this country need to know. I hope our State Department is paying attention to this, because the State Department has a different view in many respects than what I found when I was there.

I want to stress very clearly tonight that the government has reached out to the demonstrators to discuss their grievances, but they can't get them to sit down with them. The government is reaching out, but the radical elements of the demonstrators are trying to make sure that the government continues to be undermined and stopped.

Let me just end by saying that we don't have a lot of friends in that part of the world. We have seen all kinds of problems in Libya. Libya is now in a state of confusion. If you look at Egypt right now, radical elements are trying to take over the Government of Egypt. That's the biggest country in that area. We see the problems in Syria. People are being killed, and we're trying to see a resolution of that problem through the mitigation of the United Nations and the former head of the United Nations.

But that entire area is in a state of flux, and we need all the friends that we can get. One of the best friends we have in the world, in my opinion, is Bahrain. Since they are our friend and the Fifth Fleet is there and since they are a great trading partner, I think